

Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana
CROSS SYSTEMS YOUTH TASK FORCE
December 8, 2015

I. Introduction

- A. Members in attendance: Jeff Bercovitz, Chris Blessinger, Rebecca Buhner, Bruce Carter, Mary DePrez, Suzanne Draper, Hon. Steve Galvin, Cathleen Graham, Don Travis, Michelle Woodward.
Members not present: James (Mike) Goodwin, Nichole Hall, JauNae Hanger, Hon. Heather Mollo, Hon. Charles Pratt, Kathleen Rusher, Daniel Schroeder, CMDR Randal Taylor.
Guests: Hon. Gael Deppert, Marion Superior Court, Juvenile Division.
Staff in attendance: Mike Commons, Matt Hagenbush.
- B. The minutes were approved from the meeting on September 1, 2015, Motion by Cathy Graham, Second by Chris Blessinger.

II. Committee reports

- A. Middle Tier (ages 9-15).
1. This Committee has been reviewing Children, Caretakers, & Substance Abuse. The Committee invited representatives (Britney Simmons and Robin Wonnell) from the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI), Substance Abuse Division, to discuss Indiana Strategic Substance Abuse Prevention and Mental Health Promotion Targets that are used by the Local Coordinating Councils (LCCs) in developing plans for use of court fees for prevention, treatment, and law enforcement. There are LCCs in all 92 counties. The Committee recommends that:
 - a. The funding structure for LCCs be reviewed in order to promote their purpose. (The structure is good but more training is needed.)
 - b. There be enhanced training and coordination opportunities among LCCs, specifically to share results and best practices.
 - c. That schools be encouraged to participate further in the State Epidemiological Survey so that all areas of Indiana have information on which the LCCs can base their plans.

For a future topic, the Committee wants to explore any connection between LCCs and local Systems of Care.

How are LCCs funded? Through court fees collected through the county clerk's office. It is budgeted through the normal local budgeting cycle/process (after certain amounts have been removed for ICJI, etc.) LCC then establishes goals to coordinate the services in order to meet the local needs for crime related services (involving law enforcement and community partners) and accepts proposal for service providers to meet those needs. The Committee also discussed whether other funding existed or could be provided for LCCs.

2. The Committee was pleased to hear about Problem Solving Courts from the Honorable Vicki Carmichael and Iris Rubadue from Clark County regarding the Family Drug Court model; Alison Cox of Porter County Juvenile & Family Drug Court; and Diane Mains, Court Services Attorney for Problem Solving Courts for the Indiana Judicial Center (IJC).

- a. Problem Solving Courts are an evidence-based model for families and for juveniles.
- b. Families are motivated to participate in treatment and achieve family reunification more quickly through the Family Drug Court.
- c. Juveniles are involved in Juvenile Drug Court after other interventions have failed.
- d. Access to substance abuse treatment is a problem for both parents and for juveniles. For parents seeking treatment, some providers do not accept Medicaid; and other providers have waiting lists. Some juveniles need residential treatment for substance abuse (inpatient), and there are very few programs. Distance to residential treatment is a problem for family reunification.
- e. The Committee recommends that problem solving courts be strengthened through greater access to substance abuse treatment for participants.
- f. The Committee notes there is a lack of capacity among existing providers to expand, and there are a limited number of qualified professionals to provide substance abuse treatment.

The committee noted “If you’re going to keep children in home you need adequate services and adequate supervision.”

- 3. The Committee heard from Julie Smart, Department of Education (DOE), regarding Wisconsin’s model of substance abuse prevention in the schools. The model involves clarity about privileged communications, specific curriculum content, and Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) mini-grants to target student risky behaviors. The Committee strongly encourages broad-based prevention efforts and recommends that:
 - a. Language regarding privileged communications for students interacting with social workers, school counselors, nurses, and others be strengthened and clarified to encourage students to share problems with self and other student alcohol and drug use.
 - b. Information about Indiana’s Lifeline Law be more commonly shared with high school students in addition to current communications targeting...

B. Transition Age Youth (ages 16-21).

1. Met in June.

During Committee meetings they discussed homeless youth, substance abuse, and mental health issues.

SBIRT – (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) has this been studied for use with youth? Dr. Cynthia Smith from DCS spoke about this with the Adolescent Children Committee.

EBP – (Evidence Based Practices) Training is provided and certain portions of the training can be billed for but some can’t. These programs are long, involving many sessions. Some sessions are able to be paid for by billing but some aren’t. Determining how these programs can be billed for is administratively very difficult.

Recommendations regarding Homeless Youth and Substance Abuse:

- a. Work to establish clear definitions of “homeless youth” (difference between federal law and McKinney Vento Act).
- b. Work toward a formal, consistent training for school professionals regarding the handling of homeless youth.
- c. Lack of providers for substance abuse.
- d. Work on Tuition assistance for providers seeking to enter the profession.
- e. Seek more evidence-based practices regarding substance abuse/addiction which the State would:
 - i. choose to adopt; and,
 - ii. identify a funding source that can be dedicated to pay for the training for these.

C. Young Children

1. Suzanne Draper is seeking members for her Committee. Rebecca Buhner suggests having Suzanne Draper join one or more of the existing committees already meeting about early youth issues.

III. Discussion

Casey Family Programs (CFP) is coming on to help identify areas where the various Task Forces are overlapping on issues. CFP will be attempting to have a representative at the Commission meetings as well as at some of the Task Force meetings.

As a result of the Cross System Youth Symposium held in July, the action plans have been transcribed (with the assistance of DMH) and given to Jeremiah Jaggers, Assistant Professor at IUPUI to assist in determining of themes of the action plans to the Task Force. Jeremiah has the data but will not be able to analyze it until the Spring Semester.

Dual System Youth Initiatives (DSY):

Marion County DSY Initiative: The goals of this project includes: Institutionalize communication between the partners. Increase access to files, identification of data points to collect, monitor, evaluate, and analyze; be deliberative in the process of thinking about CHINS kids that are arrested and what effect it will have on that child. The Initiative is hoping to have an identified process (dedicated docket, probation officer, and DCS services) to put in place during early 2016.

TEACH Counties: Tippecanoe, Elkhart, Allen, Clark, and Henry. This initiative has a different approach than Marion County’s DSY Initiative. The TEACH counties have focused on MOUs, Form Court Orders, and processes in their initiative. These counties have been piloting these to a greater and lesser degree. On January 29, 2016, the TEACH Counties will have a Kick-off Program which will include a formal signing of the MOU between the counties and DCS as well as training for the pilot counties on the dual status model.

IV. Commission Priorities

At the last Chairs Meeting of the Commission, information was provided to the Chairs of the Task Forces with regard to identified priorities of each Task Force. For the Cross System Task Force the following priorities were identified:

A. Continue to Expand Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) and initiatives regarding disproportionate minority contact.

- As this work is already being addressed by JDAI/IJC, the Task Force suggests that JDAI can be asked to provide regular reports to the Task Force. Don Travis will discuss this report with Michelle Tennell of JDAI and Jane Seigel of IJC.

B. Increase alternatives to detention for youth with mental health issues.

- There are 98 fewer programs/units than last year. This effects group homes and emergency shelters mostly. This is causing kids to stay in detention simply because there are not sufficient “appropriate” beds. This is an issue of capacity versus functional capacity. Kids suffering from acute mental illness are being placed in detention because there aren’t programs or functional capacity to treat them.
- This is being discussed in the DCS Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Team (EMDT). They are seeking a comprehensive solution. It is not an easy fix and it is taking some time. Don Travis, along with Task Force members Rebecca Buhner and Chris Blessinger are members of the EMDT. The DCS Deputy Director of Placement Support and Compliance, Corinne Gilchrist, is also a member and has recently convened a summit to discuss this issue. Don Travis will talk with Corinne and report back to the Task Force.

C. Improve transitions for youth from Department of Correction and DCS to other agencies and to their communities, including re-entry to school.

- The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) with representatives from DCS, DOC, DMH, BDDS are discussing this issue, but no solution discussed.

D. Increase coordination among DOE, DCS, DMHA, probation, and school districts for dually adjudicated youth

- The Task Force believes the lessons learned from the TEACH counties will address this priority.

E. Dually Adjudicated Youth

- The Task Force believes the lessons learned from the TEACH counties in addition to Marion County will address this priority. .

F. Unassigned Priorities

1. Training on Trauma – Currently, JDAI is working on this issue.
2. Availability and access to effective substance abuse treatment for children and youth - Yes, Task Force is recommending this.
3. Alternatives to Detention for youth with mental health issues, as discussed above
 - (See above)
4. Early Identification and Intervention with at-risk youth - Suzanne Draper’s group will investigate this through other state early youth groups.

V. Questions/Next Steps

Status Offenders...are they child welfare or juvenile justice issues? Co-chair, Judge Pratt, to speak with Sen. Yoder on this issue.

VI. Dates for 2016 meetings:

Wednesday, February 3, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 11, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, August 10, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, November 2, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.